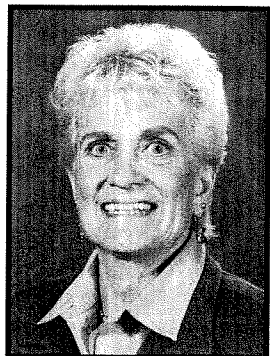


Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



State Senator

Bev Hammerstrom

State Capitol • Lansing, MI 48913

1-888-477-8238

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/hammerstrom/>

September 2, 2003



MEDICAID EXPANDED TO ASSIST KINSHIP CAREGIVERS. The Michigan Department of Community Health has recently announced new rules which will help low-income grandparents and other relatives who live with and care for nonbirth children. The new rules, issued as a result of a federal court order, are designed to assist relatives that are acting as the parent for a child but are not the biological or adopted parent. Although some caregivers may not be eligible for Medicaid at this time, they may qualify for assistance in paying for past medical bills or future medical bills that run high, depending on individual circumstances. The new rules will also allow nonparent caregivers to take deductions based on the number of children they are parenting and will count less of the caregiver's income when calculating eligibility or spend-down amounts. Kinship caregivers who previously applied but did not qualify for assistance or were given a spend-down amount should re-apply to see if the new rules will affect them. Medicaid applications are available at the local Family Independence Agency (FIA) office and may be filed by mail. For more information, visit the FIA website at www.michigan.gov/fia or the Michigan Department of Community Health website at www.michigan.gov/mdch.

MI CHOICE PROGRAM ADDS 1,800 NEW CLIENTS. After being closed for the last two years, the MI Choice program also known as the community based services program, is once again accepting applications in order to fill 1,800 new slots. Applicants must be a Medicaid recipient and require 24-hour nursing care to apply for the program. The program is designed to assist Michigan's aging and disabled residents by giving them a choice to remain living in their own home or obtain the necessary care at a qualified facility. To learn more about the MI Choice program, contact the waiver agency nearest you. For information on locating local agencies, visit the Internet at www.miseniors.net. There, select "Search for Services," then "Long Term Care," then the "MI Choice Waiver" icon. Those without Internet access may call the Michigan Council on Developmental Disabilities at 517-334-7288 to obtain local agency contact information.

MICHIGAN FISH ADVISORY AVAILABLE. The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has recently released its *2003 Michigan Fish Advisory*. This annual report is designed to promote good health through safe fish consumption. It provides guidelines on the health benefits of consuming fish, the proper cooking and cleaning of fish, ways to avoid health risks, and a chart on fish locations and potential contaminants. The information provided may be of special interest to women of childbearing age or individuals caring for children who are potentially more sensitive to certain contaminants. Copies of this publication and additional information can be found at the MDCH website, www.michigan.gov/mdch. Once there, select "Statistics and Reports," then choose "Published Reports and Surveys." Those interested may also call the MDCH Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology Division toll-free at 800-648-6942.

MDOT POTHOLE HOTLINE NOW AVAILABLE. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) recently announced a new resource for residents to help officials with the maintenance of state roads. Using either a toll-free number or their e-mail, residents may now report potholes they have encountered. The Department has established these methods so Michigan citizens can share information on the location of potholes and MDOT can transmit that information to the nearest Transportation Service Center. Officials are hopeful the convenience of this reporting will allow the public to work with state officials to identify and repair the problem in a timely manner. The hotline is now available 24 hours a day at 888-296-4546 or by logging onto the MDOT website at www.michigan.gov/mdot and selecting the "Report Potholes" button. Those reporting pothole locations are asked to provide the name of the highway, the county, the nearest community, and the closest street or interchange.

DID YOU KNOW? Michigan became the first state to issue a fish consumption advisory in 1970, following the discovery of mercury in Lake St. Clair fish.